

The Judicial Watch

# Verdict



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### Judicial Watch Reacts To Firing Of FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe



Fired FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe

Judicial Watch President Tom Fitton made the following statement regarding the firing of FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe by Attorney General Jeff Sessions:

Attorney General Sessions did the right thing in firing Andrew McCabe for repeatedly making statements to investigators that "lack candor." The FBI is not above the law. Mr. McCabe's dishonesty taints both the Clinton email inquiry and Russia collusion investigation targeting President Trump, including the Mueller operation.

Mr. McCabe should have been ousted from the FBI many months ago, when Judicial Watch first

See MCCABE on page 2

### JW Sues State/USAID For Soros' Records In Romania And Colombia

Three active FOIA lawsuits relating to the Obama administration's funding for Soros' operations

Judicial Watch filed Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) lawsuits on March 23 against the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) for records relating to their funding of the political activities of the Soros Open Society Foundations of Romania (Judicial Watch v. U.S. State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development (No. 1:18-cv-00667)) and the Soros Open Society Foundations of Colombia (Judicial Watch v. U.S. Department of State (No. 1:18-cv-00668)).

The Soros Open Society Foundations of Romania lawsuit was filed after State and

See SOROS on page 4 George Soros



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### **Cover Story**

### **McCabe**

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revealed a clear conflict of interest scandal involving his wife's political campaign.

Judicial Watch recently uncovered that McCabe, despite massive contributions from Clinton ally Terence McAuliffe to his [McCabe's] wife's 2015 political campaign, did not recuse himself from the Clinton email investigation until just a week before the 2016 presidential election. Judicial Watch also forced out documents that show that McCabe used FBI resources for his wife's campaign. These Judicial Watch finds spurred irresistible public pressure for accountability for McCabe.

Unfortunately, the FBI and DOJ are still withholding McCabe's text messages. The McCabe firing further shows the need for a full investigation of the numerous anti-Trump and other outrageous FBI abuses under Obama and McCabe's mentor, James Comey.

Last year, Judicial Watch released Justice Department records showing that FBI Deputy Director Andrew McCabe did not recuse himself from



"The McCabe firing further shows the need for a full investigation of the numerous anti-Trump and other outrageous FBI abuses under Obama and McCabe's mentor, James Comey."

> ~ Judicial Watch President Tom Fitton



the investigation into Clinton's unsecured, non-government email server until Tuesday, November 1, 2016, one week prior to the presidential election. The Clinton email probe was codenamed "Midyear Exam."



U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, D.C.



Judicial Watch is a conservative, non-partisan American educational foundation that promotes transparency, accountability and integrity in government, politics and the law. Judicial Watch advocates high standards of ethics and morality in America's public life and seeks to ensure that public officials do not abuse the powers entrusted to them by the American people.

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### Mueller's Russia Probe Is Out Of Control

**By Tom Fitton** 



This month's Message is reprinted from Tom Fitton's Fox News op-ed, April 6, 2018.

It looks like the Department of Justice botched the May 17 appointment of Special Counsel Robert Mueller.

In mid-March, former Trump presidential Campaign Chairman Paul Manafort asked a judge to dismiss Mueller's indictment against him, arguing that Mueller overstepped his jurisdiction in the probe of Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. presidential election.

In response, the special counsel was recently forced to pony up a heavily redacted memo from Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein blessing the investigation into Manafort's work with Ukraine, which turned out to have been written on August 2 — six days after the July

26 predawn, guns-drawn raid of Manafort's home, and 10 weeks after Mueller's appointment. Reportedly, Mueller's team photographed Manafort's suits during the raid.

In the deputy attorney general's subsequent justification for Mueller's wide-ranging investigation into matters related to Ukraine, Rosenstein claims that the special counsel appointment order was purposely vague, "without confirming specific investigations involving specific individuals."

The original memo authorizing Mueller's appointment, signed by Rosenstein and dated May 17 last year, focused on Russia. It states:

"The Special Counsel is authorized to conduct the investigation confirmed by then-FBI Director James B. Comey in testimony before the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence on March 20, 2017, including:

"i. any links and/or coordination between the Russian government and individuals associated with the campaign of President Donald Trump; and

Rosenstein's August CYA memo demonstrates that when it comes to the Mueller operation, the Department of Justice is willing to throw the rule of law out the window.

\* \* \*

"ii. any matters that arose or may arise directly from the investigation; and

"iii. any other matters within the scope of 28 C.F.R. § 600.4(a)." (This refers to the special counsel's original jurisdiction).

There is nothing about Ukraine.
The after-the-fact Rosenstein
memo (that had been secret for
months!) suggests, without any evidence, that the Ukrainian issue was
part of Mueller's original jurisdiction.
Is there another secret document
authorizing Mueller to investigate
any and all foreign contacts by the
Trump team?

Yes, Mueller could have gone back to his putative supervisor — Rod Rosenstein at the Justice Department — and asked for permission to investigate Manafort. And, yes, since no one running the Justice Department seems willing to say no to King Mueller, permission would likely have been granted.

But Mueller and Rosenstein did not do that. The special counsel raided Manafort's home (as part of the investigation already underway) and then received authorization to investigate him! Mueller and

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**Special Counsel Robert Mueller** 



### **Cover Story**

### Soros

#### From page 1

USAID failed to substantively respond to an October 16, 2017 FOIA request seeking, among other records:

- "All records relating to any contracts, grants or other allocations/ disbursements of funds by the State Department to the Open Society Foundation — Romania and/or its personnel and/or any OSFR subsidiary or affiliate.
- "All assessments, evaluations, reports or similar records relating to the work of Open Society Foundation — Romania and/or its subsidiaries or affiliated organizations."

The Soros Open Society Foundations of Colombia lawsuit was filed after State failed to respond to an October 23, 2017 FOIA request seeking, among other records:

"All records regarding any contracts, grants or other allocations/ disbursements of funds by the State Department to the Open Society Foundation — Colombia and/or any OSF subsidiaries/ affiliates, and/or OSF personnel operating in Colombia, as well as the following entities: Fundacion Ideas para la Paz; La Silla Vacia; DeJusticia; Corporacion Nuevo Arco Iris; Paz y Reconciliacion; Global Drug Policy Program; and

"The billionaire **George Soros needs** zero assistance from taxpayers to promote his far-left agenda abroad."

~ Iudicial Watch President

news portal Las Dos Orillas.

"All records of communication, whether by e-mails, text messages, or instant chats, between any officials, employees or representatives of the State Department in Colombia, including Ambassador Kevin Whitaker and any officials,

employees or representatives of the Open Society Foundation, its subsidiaries/affiliates, and/ or those entities identified in the first bullet."

As in other parts of the world, a number of Soros-funded entities and projects in Romania are also funded by the United States government. The Romanian Center for Independent Journalism, which is supported by the Open Society Institute in New York, recently received \$17,000 from the State Department.

In February 2017, Laura Silber of Open Society Foundations reportedly condemned "illiberal governments" in the Balkans, such as Macedonia, Albania and Romania, for working against the Soros NGOs. In Romania, in March 2017, the leader of the governing party reportedly charged that the Soros foundations "that he has funded since 1990 have financed evil.'

Soros' NGOs in Colombia are reportedly receiving millions from **USAID**:

Verdad Abierta, a web-based portal created by Teresa Ronderos, director of the Open Society Program on Independent Journalism, boasts on its website that it receives support from USAID. Abierta has helped rewrite Colombia's history, elevating terrorists to



U.S. Department of State headquarters, Washington, D.C.

the same level as the legitimate police and military forces, and rebranding decades of massacres, kidnappings, child soldiering, and drug trafficking by a criminal syndicate as simply "50 years of armed conflict."

- Fundacion Ideas para la Paz, once led by peace negotiator Sergio Iaramillo, now a member of the oversight "junta," is funded by the Open Society Foundations and has received more than \$200,000 in U.S. tax dollars.
- The left-wing news portal La Silla Vacia, another Open Society initiative, also boasts of being a USAID grantee. Its columnist, Rodrigo Uprimny, whose NGO DeJusticia also partners with USAID and Open Society, is considered one of the architects of the peace deal.
- Former National Liberation Army terrorist Leon Valencia — Open Society collaborator and grantee — has received at least \$1,000,000 in USAID funding through his NGOs Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris and Paz y Reconciliacion, and left-wing news portal Las Dos Orillas, which he co-founded.

In 2016, Soros' Open Society Foundations gave more than

See SOROS on page 5

**Tom Fitton** 





### Message from the President

### Message

### From page 3

company seem to be making up the rules as they go along.

Rosenstein's August CYA memo demonstrates that when it comes to the Mueller operation, the Department of Justice is willing to throw the rule of law out the window.

The irregular Rosenstein memo also highlights the constitutional infirmities of the special counsel's office.

Mueller isn't supervised on a dayto-day basis by any Senate-confirmed or otherwise accountable official in the Justice Department. This has resulted in an uncontrolled investigation by a special counsel into who knows what.

All this helps explain why Mueller's operation has been deepsea fishing in Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates and into the costs of Paul Manafort's suits.

Shut it down.

### Announcing Tom Fitton's Weekly Update

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### Soros

#### From page 4

\$3.3 million to organizations operating in Colombia. Several of those organizations also have been financially supported by the United States government, having received more than \$5 million from the Department of State, USAID and the Inter-American Foundation (a federal agency) in recent years. One of the Soros-funded entities, an LGBT advocacy organization, also was selected by the Inter-American Foundation as a partner organization in its Colombia peace project initiative.

"It is time for Americans to be allowed to see State Department documentation regarding the public funding of Soros' Open Society Foundations," said Judicial Watch President Tom Fitton. "The billionaire George Soros needs zero assistance from taxpayers to promote his far-left agenda abroad."

Judicial Watch now has three FOIA lawsuits relating to the Obama administration's funding for Soros' operations. JW is pursuing information about Soros' activities in Macedonia and Albania, as well. The former prime minister of Macedonia, Nikola Gruevski, reportedly called for a "de-Sorosization" of society. In February 2017, Judicial Watch reported that the U.S. government has quietly spent millions of taxpayer dollars to destabilize the democratically elected, center-right government in Macedonia in collusion with George Soros.

In a March 2017 letter to Secretary of State Rex W. Tillerson, six U.S. senators (Sens. Lee (R-UT), Inhofe (R-OK), Tillis (R-NC), Cruz (R-TX), Perdue (R-GA) and Cassidy (R-LA)) called on the secretary to investigate the relations between USAID and the Soros foundations and how U.S. tax dollars are being used by the State Department and the USAID to support left-of-center political groups who seek to impose left-leaning policies abroad.



**Judicial Watch** 

## Court Report

### FBI Will Review 16,750 Pages Of Comey Documents In Response To JW FOIA

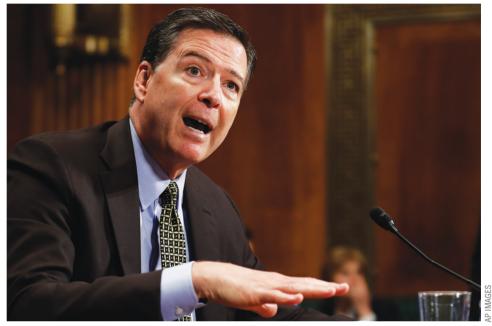
Judicial Watch announced February 16 that the FBI agreed to review 16,750 pages of records in response to a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request seeking the records for former FBI Director James Comey that were archived after he was dismissed by President Trump. Judicial Watch came to this agreement with the FBI shortly after it filed a FOIA lawsuit to obtain the Comey records (*Judicial Watch v. U.S. Department of Justice* (No. 1:18-cv-00262)).

Judicial Watch discovered the cache of Comey records as a result of disclosures by the Justice Department in separate Judicial Watch litigation (Daily Caller News Foundation v. U.S. Department Justice (No. 1:17-cv-01830) and Judicial Watch v. U.S. Department of Justice (No. 1:17-cv-01189)) to obtain the controversial "Comey memos" that allegedly memorialize conversations Comey had with President Trump.

"The Deep State is in cover-up mode. The FBI, the Justice Department and the Special Counsel, Robert Mueller, are stonewalling our requests for Comey documents."

~ Judicial Watch President Tom Fitton





Fired FBI Director James Comey

There is significant public interest in Comey's conduct and the FBI's handling of the Clinton email and Russia collusion investigations and targeting of President (and candidate) Trump.

On January 31, Judicial Watch filed a FOIA lawsuit against the Justice Department for FBI records about former Director James Comey's book, which he signed to write in August 2017 and was published in April 2018 (Judicial Watch v. U.S. Department of Justice, (No. 1:18-cv-00220)). The suit also seeks records of communications between Comey and the FBI prior to and regarding Comey's controversial June 2017 testimony before the Senate Intelligence Committee.

Comey reportedly received an advance in excess of \$2 million for his



President Donald J. Trump

book, Higher Loyalty: Truth, Lies, and Leadership, reportedly set for publication on April 17. Former FBI agents and officials intending to write books concerning their tenure are customarily required to submit the entire transcript for pre-publication review.

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Court Report

### Comey

From page 6

A month after President Trump fired Comey on May 9, 2017, the former FBI director provided highly controversial testimony before the U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence about the circumstances that led to his dismissal, the ongoing investigation into alleged Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election and his handling of the investigation into Hillary Clinton's illicit email server. During that testimony, Comey admitted he leaked information about his conversations with President Donald Trump in order to get a special prosecutor appointed. In November, Judicial Watch filed a FOIA lawsuit against the Justice Department for its records about Comey's testimony (Judicial Watch v. U.S. Department of Justice (No. 1:17-cv-02316)).

At the time the lawsuit was filed, Judicial Watch President Tom Fitton said, "Mr. Comey seems to have protected status for any misconduct, and we want to know if he had a special deal for his book from his friends in the FBI. The Deep State is in cover-up mode. The FBI, the Justice Department and the Special Counsel, Robert Mueller, are stonewalling our requests for Comey documents."

In August 2017, Judicial Watch sued the Justice Department for all nondisclosure agreements pertaining to the handling, storage, protection, dissemination and/or return of classified information that were signed by or on behalf of former FBI Director James Comey (Judicial Watch v. U.S. Department of Justice (No. 1:17-cv-01624)).

Such records would include:

- All SF-312 (Classified Information Nondisclosure Agreement) forms;
- All FD-857 (Sensitive Information Nondisclosure Agreement) forms;
- All FD-597 (Receipt for Property Received/Returned/Released or

Mr. Comey seems to have protected status for any misconduct, and we want to know if he had a special deal for his book from his friends in the FBI.

~ Judicial Watch President Tom Fitton

Seized) forms:

- All FD-291 (FBI Employment Agreement) forms; and
- All Case Briefing Acknowledgement forms.

In July 2017, Judicial Watch also filed a FOIA lawsuit against the Department of Justice for the metadata of the memoranda written by Comey memorializing his conversations with President Donald Trump as well as records about Comey's FBI-issued laptop computer or other electronic devices and records about how Comey managed his records while

he was FBI director (*Judicial Watch*, *Inc.*, *v. U.S. Department of Justice* (No. 17-cv-01520)). The metadata information may include details about when the memos were created or edited and by whom.

"The FBI has a terrible record of playing shell games with records — whether it be texts or memos by its disgraced former director, James Comey," said Judicial Watch President Tom Fitton. "Our lawsuit, we hope, will force the FBI to expedite the review and the release of the 16,750 pages of Comey documents. Open the files." W





FBI building, Washington, D.C.

### Judical Watch Joins AEF In Asking SCOTUS To Reject Maryland Gerrymandering

Urges High Court to overturn lower court and strike down 'most extreme and effective congressional gerrymander in the nation'

**Judicial Watch on January 29** joined with Allied Educational Foundation (AEF) in filing an amici curiae brief in the United States Supreme Court seeking to overturn Maryland's 2011 congressional redistricting plan, which the brief calls "the most extreme and effective congressional gerrymander in the nation" (Benisek, et al. v. Lamone, et al. (No. 17-333)). The Benisek case is on appeal from the U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland after the lower court ruled for the state in dismissing the plaintiffs' claims. The Supreme Court heard oral arguments in this case on March 28.

Critics of the Maryland plan have charged that the new congressional map was designed specifically to minimize the voting power of particular voters. *The Washington Post* 

editorialized:

"The map ... mocks the idea that voting districts should be compact or easily navigable. The eight districts respect neither jurisdictional boundaries nor communities of interest. To protect incumbents and for partisan advantage, the map has been sliced, diced, shuffled and shattered, making districts resemble studies in cubism."

Judicial Watch and AEF argue that the test applied by the lower court in this case was inadequate to determine whether Maryland's redistricting scheme constitutes an unconstitutional, partisan gerrymander that violates the First Amendment. Their brief further argues that if the lower court "To protect incumbents
and for partisan
advantage, the
[Maryland] map has been
sliced, diced, shuffled
and shattered, making
districts resemble studies
in cubism."

~ The Washington Post

\* \* \*

ruling is allowed to stand, it "will ensure that every redistricting case will become a federal case."

In their brief, Judicial Watch and AEF argue that courts must be able "to distinguish unconstitutional gerrymandering from ordinary political redistricting," which will require "manageable and politically neutral standards for detecting gerrymandering:"

"Traditional districting principles, such as compactness, contiguity and respect for established political boundaries have been bedrock considerations under this Court's redistricting jurisprudence for decades, and there is no reason to discard them in favor of untried standards that rely entirely on what legislators say (or, in future, learn not to say) and on the unpredictable fortunes of political parties. Much less is there any reason to follow currently favored social science

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Judical Watch/Allied Education Foundation amici curiae brief

No. 17-333

IN THE

Supreme Court of the United States

O. John Benisek,  $\mathit{ETAL.}$ ,  $\mathit{Appellants}$ ,  $\mathit{v}$ . Linda H. Lamone,  $\mathit{ETAL.}$ ,  $\mathit{Appellees}$ .

On Appeal from the United States District Court for the District of Maryland

BRIEF OF AMICI CURIAE JUDICIAL WATCH, INC. AND ALLIED EDUCATIONAL







### Court Report

### Court

### From page 8

theories that disregard decades of practical knowledge and jurisprudence concerning the process of drawing district lines."

The Judicial Watch/AEF brief further explains traditional districting principles about the standards adopted by the lower courts in both the Benisek case and in Beverly R. Gill, et al. v. William Whitford, et al. (No. 16-1161) and argues that the lower court ruling in this case should be overturned for ignoring them.

"The Supreme Court would be on a very dangerous course if it endorses the lead of the lower courts on gerrymandering," said Judicial Watch President Tom Fitton. "The lower courts in Maryland would tell the Supreme Court to ignore the most abusive gerrymander in the country, while the lower courts in Wisconsin would have the courts overturn district lines if not enough Democrats win. The Supreme Court should pick a reasonable judicial standard for evaluating gerrymanders to ensure that voters can pick their politicians — not the other way around."

In August 2017, Judicial Watch and AEF filed an amici brief in the Wisconsin gerrymandering case Gill urging the U.S. Supreme Court to reject the arbitrary method of drawing Wisconsin's electoral districts adopted by the lower court, which





People stand in line to enter the Supreme Court, Wednesday, March 28, 2018 in Washington, where the court heard arguments on the gerrymandering issue

"The Supreme Court would be on a very dangerous course if it endorses the lead of the lower courts on gerrymandering."

> ~ Judicial Watch **President Tom Fitton**

ignored traditional districting principles. Judicial Watch and AEF argued in that joint brief that the lower court ruling relied, in part, on a novel test for gerrymandering found nowhere in the Constitution known as the "the efficiency gap," which focuses on a purely hypothetical estimate of what each party "should" win in a "fair" election and amounts, in practice, to a court-ordered, proportional party representation scheme.

Judicial Watch earlier filed a lawsuit on behalf of voters across Maryland, also seeking to overturn Maryland's 2011 gerrymandering

scheme. In August 2016, the United States District Court for the District of Maryland ruled for the state in dismissing the plaintiffs' claims. Judicial Watch filed an appeal with the Supreme Court in October 2016. On January 9, 2017, the court dismissed the appeal.

The Supreme Court is expected to rule on the gerrymandering controversies by the end of its term this June. 🚾





Corruption

## Chronicles

### **City With Highest Per Capita Murder Rate Starts Defense Fund For Illegal Aliens**

Less than a year after Baltimore prosecutors ordered staff not to charge illegal immigrants with minor, nonviolent crimes because it could get the offenders deported, Maryland's largest city will hire immigration attorneys to help those facing removal. It's important to note that Baltimore has the nation's highest per capita homicide rate and has been coined the deadliest big city in the United States by a mainstream newspaper.

Nevertheless, a city panel in March approved spending \$200,000 to pay for lawyers to represent illegal aliens with deportation orders. Baltimore Mayor Catherine Pugh says in a local news report that the goal is for everyone to get due process. "We're not making a decision as to their status, we're making the decision to be supportive of individuals who live in our city," according to the mayor.

Unlike the criminal justice system, in immigration court the government doesn't offer free lawyers to those who can't afford them.



**Barack Obama** 



People visit in a park overlooking Baltimore's Inner Harbor, August 2017

This means that illegal aliens who don't have the money to pay for one must represent themselves in legal proceedings or rely on volunteer attorneys or paralegals provided by immigrant rights groups. This leaves many illegal aliens in removal proceedings without adequate legal representation. The trend of using taxpayer dollars to assist illegal aliens in deportation proceedings started under the Obama administration. In 2015, the former president allocated \$2 million to hire attorneys to represent the influx of illegal alien minors in federal immigration proceedings. The money flowed through a special program, Justice AmeriCorps, launched by the Department of Justice Executive Office for Immigration Review.

In response to the Trump administration's immigration-enforcement policies, American sanctuary cities

The trend of using taxpayer dollars to assist illegal aliens in deportation proceedings started under the Obama

\* \* \*

administration.

took matters into their own hands by creating local funds to help illegal aliens facing deportation. Chicago's City Council led the way by approving a \$1.3 million legal defense fund, and the City of Los Angeles followed with a \$10 million fund to help illegal immigrants dodge justice. Shortly after the city announced its special immigrant legal project, the Los

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### **Corruption Chronicles**

### Murder

#### From page 10

Angeles County Board of Supervisors offered to kick in another \$3 million to provide more lawyers. The only L.A. county supervisor who voted against the fund said it's irresponsible to allocate taxpayer money for such a program. In the city's case, the city attorney, whose office prosecutes crimes and represents L.A. in litigation, said the money will ensure that there is "more fairness and more effectiveness in the immigration system," which, of course, is a federal and not a state matter.

Baltimore took it a step further by also creating a policy to go easy on alien criminals in state cases to avert collateral immigration consequences. An internal memo issued by Baltimore's chief deputy state's attorney in mid-2017 instructs prosecutors to think twice before charging illegal immigrants with minor, nonviolent crimes. The chief deputy, Michael Schatzow, writes in the memo that the Trump administration's deportation efforts

An internal memo issued by Baltimore's chief deputy state's attorney in mid-2017 instructs prosecutors to think twice before charging illegal immigrants with minor, nonviolent crimes.

"have increased the potential collateral consequences to certain immigrants of minor, non-violent criminal conduct." Schatzow is second-in-command to Baltimore's top prosecutor, Marilyn Mosby, and oversees major crimes at the state agency. "In considering the appropriate disposition of a minor, non-violent criminal case, please be certain to consider those potential consequences to the victim, witnesses, and the defendant," Schatzow wrote to his staff.

Besides Baltimore, two other Maryland counties — Montgomery and Prince George's — also offer illegal immigrants sanctuary. When the Trump administration announced it would enforce immigration laws, Baltimore Mayor Pugh reiterated that police and other public agencies in her city never ask about immigration

"We are a welcoming city. We want everyone here. We want to be able to provide opportunities and jobs and careers for folks. That's where we are in Baltimore."

This year, Maryland legislators tried to pass a measure to make the state an official illegal-alien sanctuary but the bill, known as the Trust Act, hit a roadblock in a Senate committee after passing in the House of Delegates, and the governor has vowed to veto it even if it survives.





### HUD Gives \$5 Mil. To Obama Plan To Turn Slums Into Middle-Class Neighborhoods

A controversial Obama program that's reaped enormous amounts of taxpayer money to transform slums into desirable middle-class neighborhoods just got a \$5 million infusion from the Trump administration. Known as Choice Neighborhoods, the costly experiment was the centerpiece of a broader Obama initiative to convert poverty-stricken neighborhoods into sustainable. mixed-income areas with affordable housing, safe streets and good schools. It was launched as a collaboration between the departments of Housing and Urban Development, Education, Justice, Treasury and Health and Human Services to help attract private investment necessary to transform distressed areas.

During Obama's tenure, Choice Neighborhoods received a breathtaking \$375 million, according to Housing and Urban Development figures. A substantial chunk of it — \$120 million — was rewarded as a parting gift in 2016, the HUD numbers reveal, and the largest portion — \$122.27 million — was allocated

The Department of Housing and Urban Development has been embroiled in a multitude of serious scandals — under both Democrat and Republican administrations — over the years, involving leadership, low-level employees and field directors.



2016 Choice Neighborhood Grant Award, St. Louis, Missouri

in 2010 when Obama launched the program. Like many of the former president's initiatives, large sums of cash went to leftist nonprofits and community groups that aligned with his liberal agenda. Back in 2012, Judicial Watch reported that the administration paid half a million dollars to study the effectiveness of Choice Neighborhoods, including the challenges of bringing healthy food options to poor areas and the characteristics of the neighborhoods being targeted for transformation.

The recent \$5 million infusion will promote "a comprehensive approach to transforming neighborhoods struggling to address the interconnected challenges of distressed housing, inadequate schools, poor health, high crime, and lack of capital," according to a Housing and Urban Development statement. Los Angeles, California; Lewiston, Maine; and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania will receive the biggest portions, \$1.3 million each. Chicago, Illinois, Huntington, West

Virginia and Cleveland, Ohio each get \$350,000 to revitalize poor neighborhoods. The goal is to replace distressed public housing with high-quality, mixed-income housing and improve residents' employment, income, health and education.

The agency announcement states that, ultimately, this will create the conditions necessary for public and private reinvestment in distressed neighborhoods. Three of the awardees will get an additional \$950,000 for "action activities" to build momentum and attract additional investment, according to Housing and Urban Development. The extra cash can be used to recycle vacant properties into community gardens or farmers' markets or for community arts projects that beautify an area.

There was tremendous hope that the Trump administration would cut back on some of these wasteful Obama-era programs at many of the government's largest agencies,

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### **Corruption Chronicles**

### HUD

### From page 12

especially Housing and Urban Development. So far, that hasn't been the case.

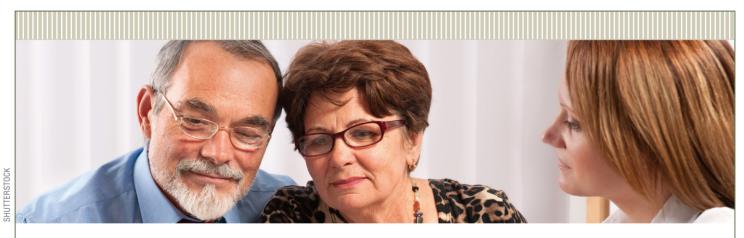
Earlier this year, the Department of Housing and Urban Development gave \$37 million to dozens of leftist groups that purport to fight housing discrimination. The biggest chunk — \$999,962 — went to a nonprofit that attacked President Trump for terminating an Obama program that protects hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrants living in the United States. Shortly before getting its money, the Washington, D.C. group, National Fair Housing Alliance (NFHA), bashed the president over a contentious policy known as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), which shields nearly 800,000 illegal aliens under the age of 31 from deportation



and lets them obtain work permits and drivers' licenses.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development has been embroiled in a multitude of serious scandals — under both Democrat

and Republican administrations — over the years, involving leadership, low-level employees and field directors. Problems go back to the Ronald Reagan administration, when an influence-peddling scandal led to the conviction of 16 people, including top aides to then Housing and Urban Development Secretary Samuel Pierce. Bill Clinton's housing secretary, Henry Cisneros, pleaded guilty to lying to the FBI about payments to his former mistress. George W. Bush's housing secretary, Alphonso Jackson, was ousted after the feds launched an investigation into his plots to enrich himself and his friends by giving them lucrative government contracts. Barack Obama's second housing secretary, Julian Castro, misspent the agency's federal funds as mayor of San Antonio.



### Before the end of 2018, complete and update your will

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## Uncovered

### Nearly 200 Busted In \$3.7-Million Food-Stamp Fraud Operation

More than a year after the Obama administration slammed American taxpayers with a record-high tab to provide an unprecedented number of people with food stamps, the fraud continues full-throttle in the bloated welfare program. Authorities in north Florida arrested nearly 200 people for operating a sophisticated ring in which millions of dollars in food stamps were fraudulently exchanged for cash and drugs. Keep in mind that food stamps — renamed by the Obama administration Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to eliminate stigma — are designed to help nourish the nation's most needy.

For years, Judicial Watch has reported extensively on the rampant fraud in the program, which cost U.S. taxpayers a bewildering \$80.4 billion in one year to provide a record 46 million people with the welfare benefit during Obama's tenure. Even then, a federal audit revealed that many who didn't qualify for food stamps received them under a special "broad-based" eligibility program that disregards income and asset requirements. The expansion was part of the former president's mission to eradicate "food insecure households" in the U.S. To accomplish it, the administration spent millions of dollars on ad campaigns to recruit

"The SNAP/EBT program is designed to provide services to the most vulnerable among us and for anyone to take advantage of this system is shameful."

~ Florida Attorney General Pam Bondi

\* \* \*

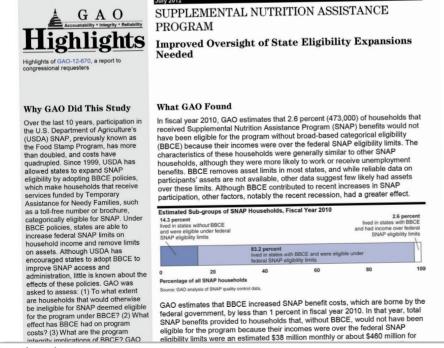
more food-stamp recipients, even doling out hefty cash rewards to local governments that signed up the most people. One state even bragged about a \$5 million performance bonus it got from the feds for its "swift processing of applications."

Not surprisingly, the food-stamp program became a hotbed of fraud and corruption. Recipients use social media to illegally sell and buy food stamps online and others use the welfare benefit to buy drugs, weapons and other contraband from unscrupulous vendors, according to a federal audit that also says some trade food stamps for reduced amounts of cash. The fraud costs the government hundreds of millions of dollars, the audit discloses.

This was back in 2012, when the inspector general of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the agency that distributes food stamps, told Congress about the serious issues plaguing the program. Things

See FRAUD page 15

#### **GAO** report on SNAP





### Government Uncovered

### **Fraud**

### From page 14

got so out of control that the Obama administration dedicated \$7 million to crack down on food-stamp fraud in 2014. Among the anti-fraud initiatives that the money funded were strategies to identify and successfully investigate attempts to buy or sell SNAP benefits online using social media such as Facebook, Twitter or e-commerce websites such as Craigslist and eBay.

More than a year after Obama left the USDA program in disarray, the scams continue. In the recently busted Florida operation, more than 22,000 fraudulent transactions totaling \$3.7 million were documented by a task force of local and federal authorities. It has been coined Operation Half-Back, and a Jacksonville news report says undercover officers personally observed 115 individuals commit 390 fraudulent transactions involving food stamps. In most cases, the food-stamp recipient took 50 cents per \$1 in benefit. Some of the corrupt vendors were stores, but many were mobile businesses that sell food and have Department of Agriculture approval to accept food stamps as payment. Among the biggest offenders are one business that recorded 7,164 fraudulent transactions for \$1.1 million, another that had 7,390 transactions totaling \$1 million, a seafood store that recorded 3,958 transactions for \$1.2 million and a mobile meat



Signage at a retailer

vender that had 3,958 fraudulent transactions for \$572,282.

The undercover sting started back in 2012, the year the Obama administration shattered food-stamp spending records. Law enforcement agencies created fictitious businesses, according to the Florida attorney general's office, which disclosed in March that more than 115 individuals have been charged with felonies and 61 others with misdemeanors. Though the federal government doles out food stamps, in Florida a state agency called Department of Children and Families administers it to provide nutrition assistance to vulnerable

populations such as children, senior citizens and families in economic distress. "Food stamp trafficking steals from Florida's hardworking taxpavers," Florida Attorney General Pam Bondi said in a statement. "The SNAP/EBT program is designed to provide services to the most vulnerable among us and for anyone to take advantage of this system is shameful."

Florida seems to be a hotbed of food-stamp rackets. Less than two years ago, the feds busted the largest food-stamp fraud operation in U.S. history in South Florida. Twenty-two defendants in the largely black and Hispanic areas of Miami-Dade County known as Opa-Locka and Hialeah swindled the government out of \$13 million by fraudulently trading food stamps for cash. The crooked vendors operated food and produce stands at a local flea market as part of then-First Lady Michelle Obama's initiative to eradicate "food deserts," common in poor, minority communities where fresh, healthy food is tough to find or often unavailable. The feds say the business owners and their employees let food-stamp recipients use their welfare benefit to get cash in exchange for a cut of the money. Jw

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### **(**

#### **INVESTIGATIVE BULLETIN**

### Clinton, Comey, Uranium One: Who Is John W. Huber?

By Micah Morrison, Judicial Watch Chief Investigative Reporter



Widespread head-scratching has followed Attorney General Jeff Sessions' recent disclosure that U.S. Attorney John W. Huber is leading an investigation into 2016 election controversies. In a March 29 letter to Republican committee chairmen, Mr. Sessions said that Mr. Huber, the U. S. attorney for Utah, had been appointed to "evaluate certain issues" raised by the GOP. He did not say which issues, but there are plenty.

In a July 27, 2017 letter, GOP leaders had called on Mr. Sessions to "appoint a second special counsel to investigate a plethora of matters connected to the 2016 election and

its aftermath." These matters included actions by Hillary Clinton, James Comey, Loretta Lynch and others, email controversies, mishandling of classified information, Fusion GPS and the Steele dossier, FISA warrants, wiretaps, leaks, grand juries, the Clinton Foundation and the Uranium One deal.

Mr. Sessions instead appointed Mr. Huber, "an experienced federal prosecutor," and left the door open to a special counsel. Mr. Sessions noted that Mr. Huber "will make recommendations as to whether any matters not currently under investigation should be opened, whether any matters currently under investigation require further resources, or whether any matters merit the appointment of a Special Counsel."

Translation: Mr. Huber is investigating the investigations, not the underlying allegations.

Mr. Huber was appointed assistant U.S. attorney in Utah in 2002. He was named U.S. attorney in 2015 by Barack Obama. Mr. Huber has an important backer in Utah's senior

One part of Mr. Huber's mandate, as outlined in the GOP letter, is the "purchase of Uranium One by the company Rosatom, whether the approval of the sale was connected to any donations to the Clinton Foundation, and what role Secretary Clinton played in the approval of the sale."

\* \* \*

senator, Orrin Hatch. After President Trump requested the resignations of all sitting U.S. attorneys, Mr. Sessions kept Mr. Huber alive with an interim appointment under the Federal Vacancies Act until the president could be persuaded to renominate him. He was confirmed a second time for the post in August.

It's a truism of law enforcement that if you want to pursue high-level political corruption, get yourself a junkyard dog — a strong prosecutor, good in a fight. Hickman Ewing Jr. - the former U.S. attorney for the Western District of Tennessee and later the Whitewater deputy independent counsel — comes to mind. Mr. Ewing had a long track record of pursuing political corruption before Kenneth Starr tapped him for the Whitewater probe. The office of U.S. attorney in Utah, by contrast, has been toothless. Mr. Huber has not been implicated in any wrongdoing, but for the last three years it has been his shop and his responsibility. Before that, it was his training ground.

In November, for example, a federal judge dismissed the last charges against Terry Diehl, a powerful Utah developer and former Utah Transit

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United States Attorney John W. Huber





### Government Uncovered

### Huber

### From page 16

Authority board member. The government was widely seen as bungling the case. The Salt Lake Tribune noted that Diehl, "a well-known developer with friends in high places — including [Utah] House Speaker Greg Hughes, R-Draper — once stood charged with 14 felony counts that stemmed from allegations that he lied about or hid assets as part of a 2012 bankruptcy. Prosecutors had whittled the case down three times since early October, dropping counts of concealment and tax evasion." Prosecutors acknowledged "missteps" to the newspaper, including getting wrong the amount of taxes Diehl allegedly did not pay.

Mr. Huber's office also lost a 2017 case against real-estate mogul Rick Koerber, charged with running a multi-million-dollar Ponzi scheme. The case — the government's second try — ended in a mistrial. A judge threw out an earlier case. The government will try again in September.

But the Rosetta Stone for understanding Utah's corruption problems

may be the sprawling saga of John Swallow and Mark Shurtleff, two former Utah attornevs general charged with a multitude of corruption charges. The case gripped the state for years. Mr. Huber's office recused itself in 2013 from the investigations, transferring the case to Colorado. Later, the Justice Department declined to charge either man and Utah state prosecutors took over. Swallow was acquitted on all counts last year, and the charges against Shurtleff were dropped in 2016 by Davis County Attorney Troy Rawlings, who bitterly complained about FBI and Justice Department conduct in the case.

That's how the game is played in Utah, locals say. Power brokers have the state wired. Mr. Huber seems like a decent man, but his tenure at the top of Utah law enforcement has been short and undistinguished. Why appoint him to such a sensitive position in Washington?

One explanation is that Mr. Sessions knows precisely who Mr. Huber is and what he wants from him. Mr. Sessions went to bat for Mr. Huber in his reappointment as U.S. attorney and named him vice-chair of the prestigious Attorney General's Advisory Committee. Mr. Huber, a political survivor, also knows precisely who Mr. Sessions is and what the attorney general wants from him.

Another more intriguing explanation is that Mr. Sessions needs someone who knows Utah. One part of Mr. Huber's mandate, as outlined in the GOP letter, is the "purchase of Uranium One by the company Rosatom, whether the approval of the sale was connected to any donations to the Clinton Foundation, and what role Secretary Clinton played in the approval of the sale."

Uranium One's assets included significant holdings in Utah and nearby states. Prosecutors — and the media, so transfixed by the Mueller probe that they decline to look elsewhere — should follow the Uranium One money in Utah and the rest of the West. And, if Mr. Huber does recommend additional investigations or a second special counsel, Mr. Sessions should get himself a junkyard dog. (W)

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**Judicial Watch** 

## In the Media

### Trump family and Administration Members Spending Millions on 'Extravagant' Private Travel

### Newsweek March 3, 2018

Top House Democrats are calling for hearings on whether the Trump administration has "adequate controls" to protect taxpayer money in light of recent "extravagant air travel" by cabinet members.

In a letter Tuesday to Republican Representative Trey Gowdy, who is chairman of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Democratic congressmen Elijah Cummings and Raja Krishnamoorthi pointed out two Trump cabinet members as the latest examples of "questionable and expensive travel at the taxpayer expense."

The letter comes less than two months after the conservative legal group Judicial Watch released a report showing that Trump and his family's travel costs are on pace to meet or exceed those of his predecessor, Barack Obama.

Trump and his family have spent at least \$13.5 million on political and leisure trips as of February 9, according to **Judicial Watch**, which has uncovered \$114.6 million worth of Obama and his family's travel costs.

### Judicial Watch: Training Documents Show Broward County Sheriff's Office 'Failed the Victims of the Parkland Shooting' Breitbart

### March 15, 2018

In a release issued on March 15, Judicial Watch reported that Broward County Operations documents direct deputies to confront an active shooter, which is what Deputy Scot Peterson did not do when he arrived at building 12 of the Parkland high



Chief National Correspondent Ed Henry (left) and Judicial Watch President Tom Fitton appeared on the Fox News Channel, April 2018

Judicial Watch President
Tom Fitton said Netflix had
"[doubled] down in support of
Obama corruption" by hiring
Rice, a controversial figure
in the aftermath of the 2012
Benghazi attack, as well as
the "unmasking" controversy
surrounding members of the
Trump campaign.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

school.

Breitbart News reported that surveillance video from outside the school appears to show Peterson arrive outside building 12 and remain outside while Nikolas Cruz shot and killed students and teachers.

Judicial Watch notes that Broward County Sheriff's Office training and operations docs explain that the reason for confronting the shooter is to save lives. The training and

operations "lesson plan" instructs deputies to confront a shooter immediately because "history shows when a suspect is confronted by any armed individual... they either shoot it out with that person or kill themselves. Either way, the shooting of innocent bystanders must stop."

### Judicial Watch Sues for Records on Taxpayer-Funded Soros Projects Overseas

### Washington Free Beacon March 28, 2018

State Dept., USAID fail to respond to request for records on spending in Romania, Colombia

The conservative watchdog Judicial Watch has filed a lawsuit to try to obtain records from the State Department about the taxpayer-funded political activities of George Soros' groups in Colombia and Romania.

The watchdog said it took the action because the State Department and the U.S. Agency for International

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In the Media

### Media

#### From page 18

Development (USAID) failed to respond to its Freedom of Information Act requests last fall for records relating to contracts, grants and other "allocations/disbursements of funds" by Open Society Foundations offices in Romania and Colombia.

The watchdog is also seeking information about Soros' activities in Macedonia and Albania.

### Big tech companies offer gilded safe space for Obama officials **Fox News** March 29, 2018

When former National Security Adviser Susan Rice was named to the Netflix board of directors Wednesday, she became at least the third high-ranking official under former President Barack Obama to receive a top post at a tech giant after leaving the White House.

In announcing Rice's appoint-



Then-Obama National Security Adviser Susan

ment, Netflix co-founder and CEO Reed Hastings said the former U.S. ambassador to the U.N. had "tackled difficult, complex global issues with intelligence, integrity and insight."

Rice's appointment was met with outrage from some conservatives.

3/19

3/26

Judicial Watch President Tom Fitton said Netflix had "[doubled] down in support of Obama corruption" by hiring Rice, a controversial figure in the aftermath of the 2012 Benghazi attack, as well as the "unmasking" controversy surrounding members of the Trump campaign.

A growing number of conservative leaders and GOP lawmakers are voicing their support for Environmental **Protection Agency Administrator** Scott Pruitt amid some calls for him to resign

### **Daily Signal** April 6, 2018

The Conservative Action Project released a letter Friday with 113 signatures of conservative leaders calling on President Donald Trump to keep Pruitt in the administration.

"Conservatives stand behind

National - Live

National - Live

See MEDIA page 20

### JW Earns Nationwide Media Coverage

### March 19, 2018 - April 19, 2018

Fox Business Network

3/18

OAN

The following list partially details recent radio and television appearances by Judicial Watch spokesmen, as well as general television and radio coverage of Judicial Watch's investigations and lawsuits.

Radio		
3/19	WMAL	National – Live
3/20	WTN	Nashville, TN - Live
3/22	WBDO	Orlando, FL – mention
3/28	Radio America/Newsmax	National – Live
3/29	Revolution Boston	Boston, MA - mention
	Radio 1510	
3/29	WOKV	Jacksonville, FL
3/29	WHYY	Philadelphia, PA – mention
3/30	WBEN	Buffalo, NY
4/1	WOKV	Jacksonville, FL - mention
4/2	KOGO	San Diego, CA
4/2	WSB	Atlanta, GA – mention
4/6	Salem Radio Network	National – Live
4/6	WLS	Chicago, IL - mention
4/12	USA Radio Network	National – Live
4/14	Sirius XM Breitbart	National – Live
4/13	WNYC	New York, NY – mention
4/16	Sirius XM	National – Live
4/16	WMAL	National – Live
4/18	WRKO Boston	Boston, MA – Live
TV		

National - Live

National - Live

3/26	Sinclair	National – Live	
3/26	Fox Business Network	National – Live	
3/27	Fox Business Network	National – Live	
3/28	Fox Business Network	National – Live	
3/29	Fox Business Network	National – Live	
3/31	Fox Business Network	National – Live	
4/1	Fox Business Network	National – Live	
4/2	Fox News Channel	National – Live	
4/2	Fox News Channel	National – Live	
4/2	Fox Business Network	National – Live	
4/3	Fox Business Network	National – Live	
4/5	Fox News Channel	National – Live	
4/5	Fox Business Network	National – Live	
4/5	Fox Business Network	National – Live	
4/5	Fox News Channel	National – Live	
4/6	Fox Business Network	National – Live	
4/8	Fox News Channel	National – Live	
4/9	Fox News Channel	National – Live	
4/9	Fox Business Network	National – Live	
4/12	Fox News Channel	National – Live	
4/12	Fox Business Network	National – Live	
4/13	Fox Business Network	National – Live	
4/14	Fox News Channel	National – Live	
4/16	Fox News Channel	National – Live	
4/16	OAN	National – Live	
4/16	Fox Business Network	National – Live	
4/16	NRA TV	National – Live	
4/17	Fox Business Network	National – Live	
4/17	Fox Business Network	National – Live	
PLUS 377 more!			

Fox Business Network

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### In the Media

### Media

### From page 19

Scott Pruitt as administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency ... and thank him for the significant actions he has taken to implement President Trump's deregulatory agenda," the letter read. "President Trump campaigned on reducing Washington's bureaucracy, and Administrator Pruitt has been instrumental to that effort."

A growing number of conservative leaders and GOP lawmakers are voicing their support for Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt amid some calls for him to resign.

Signatories included American Legislative Exchange Council CEO Lisa Nelson, Judicial Watch President Tom Fitton, former Sen. Jim DeMint of South Carolina, former Virginia Attorney General and Senate Conservatives Fund President Ken Cuccinelli, and Citizens United President David Bossie. 'He just chatted about his grandkids': Loretta Lynch still insists she DIDN'T talk with Bill Clinton about Hillary's email case during secret airport tarmac meeting Daily Mail April 9, 2018

Former U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch insists her infamous secret 2016 meeting with former President Bill Clinton had nothing to do with the investigation into Hillary Clinton that was ramping up at the time.

Lynch has seldom addressed the subject since first acknowledging that she had met with Bill Clinton on a Phoenix, Arizona airport tarmac just months before the presidential election.

Mrs. Clinton was at the time the subject of an FBI investigation into her use of a private, unsecured email account during her time as secretary of state — an account that housed classified documents.



**Hillary Clinton** 

\*\*:

Tom Fitton, president of the right-leaning watchdog group Judicial Watch, said Saturday on the Fox News Channel, "We still don't have a full explanation from either her or Bill Clinton about what went on."



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